

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

USMISSION GENEVA

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UNCLAS DAR ES SALAAM 0379

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

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SUBJ: GENEVA CONFERENCE ON RHODESIA

1. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT JANUARY 28 FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL IN TANZANIA GOVERNMENT OWNED DAILY NEWS. SUBSTANTIALLY IDENTICAL EDITORIAL APPEARED SAME DAY IN THE TANU PARTY'S SWAHILI-LANGUAGE UHURU.

2. QUOTE: IAN SMITH ATTENDED THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON RHODESIA AT THE INVITATION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. HE HAS NOW STATED THAT HE WILL NOT RETURN TO RESUMED CONFERENCE. THE ANSWER TO THAT CAN ONLY BE: "SO WHAT?" HIS ABSENCE IS NOT UNCLASSIFIED

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A REASON FOR THE TALKS TO BE ABANDONED. THE COLONIAL POWER IN RHODESIA IS THE UNITED KINGDOM. THE PEOPLE OF RHODESIA ARE REPRESENTED BY THE NATIONALISTS. IF THERE IS TO BE AGREEMENT ABOUT THE TRANSFER OF POWER FROM BRITAIN TO THE PEOPLE OF RHODESIA IT HAS TO BE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE NATIONALISTS. AND THE PURPOSE OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS TO GET AGREEMENT ABOUT THE TRANSFER OF POWER.

THE ZIMBABWE NATIONALISTS ACCEPTED SMITH'S PRESENCE AT GENEVA ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE BRITISH WERE TRYING TO ACHIEVE TWO THINGS SIMULTANEOUSLY. THE FIRST WAS AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COLONIAL POWER AND THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE ABOUT THE TRANSFER OF LEGAL POWER. THE SECOND WAS THE POLITICAL ELIMINATION OF THE MINORITY REGIME WITHOUT FURTHER STRUGGLE. IN NEITHER CASE WAS THE PROPER ROLE OF THE BRITISH REPRESENTATIVES THAT OF A REFEREE BETWEEN SMITH AND NATIONALISTS. A LOT OF THE APPARENT MANOEUVRING AT GENEVA STEMMED FROM THE NEED TO MAKE THIS CLEAR.

THE CHANCES OF BOTH THESE TWO OBJECTIVES BEING ACHIEVED IN A CONFERENCE PRESSURE ON SMITH WAS ONLY BEGINNING TO BECOME EFFECTIVE. HE HAD NOT BEEN FORCED BY WAR TO FACE UP TO REALITIES. THE HOPE THAT POLITICAL PRESSURES HAD ACHIEVED THAT RESULT HAS NOW - ONCE AGAIN - BEEN SHOWN TO BE PREMATURE. BUT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS OPENED. ONE OF TWO THINGS FOLLOWS. EITHER THE CONFERENCE LEADS TO PROGRESS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR MAJORITY RULE; OR THE POLITICAL FRONT IN WHICH BRITAIN IS REGARDED AS AN ALLY IS DISCREDITED FOR ALL TIME AS AN EFFECTIVE FORCE IN THE REMOVAL OF MINORITY RULE IN ZIMBABWE. IT IS TO BE HOPED, THEREFORE, THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REALISES THE FULL IMPLICATIONS OF A FAILURE TO CONTINUE WITH THE TALKS.

SUCH A FAILURE WILL MEAN THAT THE WAR AGAINST THE MINORITY REGIME WILL BE PURSUED TO THE END. THERE WILL BE NO QUESTION OF THE NATIONALISTS ATTENDING ANOTHER CONFERENCE CALLED BY BRITAIN. FOR, ABANDONING THE TALKS NOW WILL BE TANTAMOUNT TO A BRITISH UNCLASSIFIED

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DECLARATION THAT THEY SEE THEMSELVES AS A REFEREE BETWEEN NATIONALISTS AND SMITH, NOT AS AN ENEMY OF MINORITY RULE.

WHETHER ALL HOPE OF A POLITICAL END TO THE RHODESIAN STRUGGLE HAS TO BE ABANDONED THEREFORE DEPENDS UPON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S DECISION NOW. IF THEY CONTINUE TALKS WITH THE NATIONALISTS, THAT HOPE WILL REMAIN EVEN IF THE POLITICAL CONCLUSION OF THE STRUGGLE IS AGAIN DEFERRED. IF THEY SEE NO POINT IN WORKING WITH THE EFFECTIVE NATIONALIST FORCES FOR AN END TO THE SMITH REGIME, THEN THE BRITISH - AND ALL OF US - HAVE TO ACCEPT THE CONSEQUENCES.

THE WAR WILL BE CONTINUED AND INTENSIFIED. IT WILL BE PURSUED BY WHATEVER MEANS ARE NECESSARY, AND WITH WHATEVER ALLIES ARE POSSIBLE. AND THE SUFFERING WILL BE TERRIBLE. THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE WHOLE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND PERHAPS FOR THE WORLD, ARE INCALCULABLE. THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS OPENED. WITHOUT SMITH IT CAN BE USEFUL. TALKS NOW CAN LEAD TO AGREEMENT BETWEEN BRITAIN AND THE NATIONALISTS ON THE PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES FOR A TRANSFER OF POWER. AND THEY CAN LEAD TO AN

AGREEMENT, OR AT LEAST AN UNDERSTANDING, ABOUT THE DIFFERENT PARTS THE TWO SIDES WILL PLAY IN THE STRUGGLE TO END MINORITY DOMINATION AND THUS ALLOW THE POLITICAL AGREEMENT TO BE IMPLEMENTED.

AS THE WAS GOES ON WE HOPE THAT BRITAIN WILL KEEP THE POLITICAL FRONT OPEN.
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